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A NEW *ALESTES* AND LITTLE-KNOWN *BARBUS* FROM GABOON

BY J. T. NICHOLS AND F. R. LA MONTE

Mr. Otis Barton has presented the Museum with a few small fishes he obtained at Mouila, in the Ogowé Valley, Gaboon, in September, 1951.

They comprise one specimen each of four species of *Alestes*, one of which seems to be undescribed and the other three we identify as *A. chaperi* Sauvage, and the young of *A. kingsleyi* Günther and *A. schoutedeni* Boulenger. There are also two specimens of a little known form of *Barbus guirali* Thominot (see beyond). Incidentally, *Alestes schoutedeni* is the only one of these five species represented in the extensive collection of fresh-water fishes of the Congo Basin obtained by the American Museum Congo Expedition of 1909 to 1915.

***Alestes bartoni*, new species**

Figure 1

An elongate *Alestes* (depth 3.4) with 34 scales in the lateral line, 5 1/2 rows above it; the dorsal high and pointed, its origin immediately behind the base of the ventrals; 21 anal rays; a conspicuous black blotch at the base of the caudal, and vague dark blotch behind the head at a level of the upper half of the eye.

DESCRIPTION OF TYPE: No. 19654, the American Museum of Natural History, from Mouila, Ogowé Valley, Gaboon, Africa, September, 1951, collected by Otis Barton, our only specimen.

Length to base of caudal, 89 mm. Depth in this length, 3.4; head, 3.9. Eye in head, 2.9; snout, 3.4; interorbital, 3.0; maxillary, 2.8; greatest width of body, 2.3; depth of peduncle, 2.5; its length,

1.4; pectoral, 1.2; ventral, 1.5; longest anal ray, 2. Head in longest dorsal ray, 1.2.

Dorsal, 10; anal, 21. Scales 34, 5 1/2 rows above lateral line. Gill-rakers (lower limb of arch), 12 or 14.

Body well compressed, back little elevated, outline very shallowly convex from lower jaw to ventrals, thence slanting slightly downward to anal origin, abruptly upward from anal origin to peduncle. Snout short, blunt, maxillary curving more downward than backward, and not reaching to under front margin of eye.

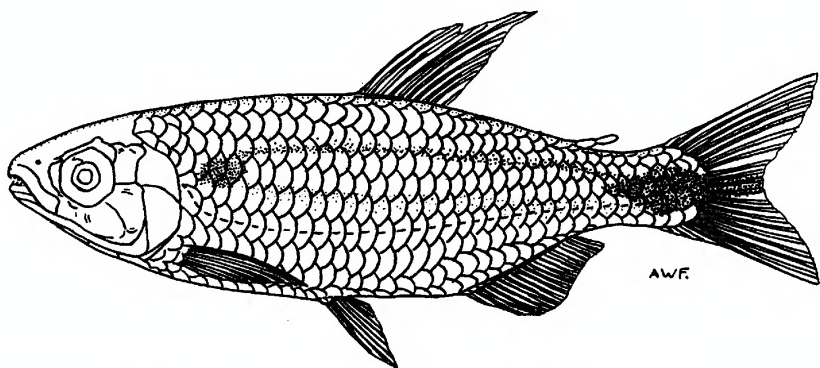


FIG. 1. *Alestes bartoni*, type. Standard length, 89 mm.

Dorsal high and pointed, when depressed its tip not reaching adipose by a distance equal to half eye, its origin immediately behind the base of ventrals, slightly nearer base of caudal than tip of snout. Pectorals reaching five-sixths of the distance to ventrals; ventrals, with a very short filamentous tip, to vent, and five-sixths to anal origin.

A conspicuous black blotch covers the middle of the hind end of peduncle and base of caudal, extending narrowly back on the middle caudal rays; there is a vague dark blotch behind the head at a level of the upper half of the eye; and a faint silvery band, dark along its upper margin, extends thence straight backward onto the peduncle.

This fish probably represents *Alestes intermedius* Boulenger of South Cameroon, in the Ogowe Valley. Its differences therefrom are slight, some correlated with being conspicuously longer bodied (as more slender peduncle, fewer scale rows above the lateral line). Its dorsal is high and of similar shape, but placed somewhat

farther back, and to judge from our single specimen there are slight color differences. It is likely that the half-grown *A. intermedius* listed by Boulenger, 1909 (Catalogue of the fresh-water fishes of Africa, vol. 1, p. 202) from Ogowe, should be referred to this form.

We take pleasure in naming an African fish for Mr. Otis Barton, whose unconquerable spirit of adventure has taken him many places, and who has brought back to the American Museum various new or little-known fishes from diverse parts of the world.

***Barbus guirali melanepiptera* Pellegrin**

Two specimens of *Barbus* 57 and 76 mm. long (without caudal) are close to *Barbus guirali* Thomassinot, 1886, from Cameroon, but differ from his description, and the subsequent ones by Boulenger and by Pappenheim, 1911, of specimens from there, in that the whole dorsal fin has a broad black margin, not covering merely the first three branched rays, though the black margin is somewhat narrower and less intense posteriorly.

Pellegrin published an incomplete description of *melanepiptera*, as a race of *B. camptacanthus*, in 1924, from Gaboon (Bull. Soc. Zool. France, vol. 49, p. 288), but in 1930 (Bull. Soc. Zool. France, vol. 55, p. 199) considered it the young of *guirali*. We are satisfied that the above specimens are referable to his *melanepiptera*, but at least suspect that the same is a valid race of *guirali*.

Both our specimens are males (determined by dissection and smear—C. Marzullo), and it is possible that the differently colored dorsal is a sex character.

Scales with a few conspicuous radiating striae. Last simple dorsal ray rather slender, but well ossified and serrate for two-thirds of its length; two barbels on each side. Scales 22, 12 around caudal peduncle. Base of ventral entirely below the dorsal. Dorsal branched rays, 8; anal, 5. Depth in standard length, 2.6 (2.5 in the smaller); caudal peduncle as long as deep (slightly longer than deep in the smaller). Posterior barbel, 1.6 times eye. Head rather pointed, snout as long as eye. Head in length, 3.5 (3.2 in the smaller). Eye in head, 3.3 (3.2 in the smaller); interorbital, 3. Dorsal base equidistant between the root of caudal and hind margin of eye (center of eye in the smaller).

